

Section 5.0

Visual Themes and Zones

5

5.1 INTRODUCTION

An Installation Design Guide has been developed for Fort Wainwright and is currently in use and updated as required. The current IDG provides recommendations for improvements to enhance the visual and functional quality of the installation through the use of design standards and improved maintenance standards. It calls for a significant range of visual and functional improvements for Fort Wainwright that would enhance the appearance of major activity areas, improve the efficiency and appearance of major circulation routes, enhance existing landscaping to unify the installation, provide architectural and color guidelines for existing and new facilities, and improve maintenance practices for aesthetic purposes.

Many of the recommendations contained in the current Design Guide have been implemented and some have not. Of positive significance is the development of the new medical facility, Company Campus, and Family Housing improvements. The visual zones and projects proposed in this Installation Design Guide build upon some of the recommendations found in the current Installation Design Guide.

Visual themes and zones were determined after conducting visual and spatial surveys as mentioned in [paragraph 2.2](#). These surveys were conducted using existing installation maps, visual inspection, interviews, and photographs to record impressions of visual and spatial impacts. The data captured was used to define the visual themes and zones of the installation.

Figure 5.1a presents a graphical portrayal of the installation's visual themes and zones. Table 5.1a shows the visual theme/visual zone relationship within Fort Wainwright.

▼ **Table 5.1a**
Theme/Zone Relationship

Theme	Family Housing	Historic Airfield	River Corridor	Town Center	Industrial	Recreation/ Open Space	Company Campus
Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Neighborhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic Landmark Administration Quad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chena River Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange/ Commissary Open Space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power Plant DPW Shops Motor Pools Badger Lake Meridian Road Neely Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alder Avenue Ball Field Complex Badger Gate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barracks Monterey Lake
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Entrance Gate Chilkoot Housing Site Improvements Northern Lights Housing Site Improvements Southern Cross Housing Site Improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaffney Road Streetscape Improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chena River Trail Extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange/ Commissary Entry Improvements Open Space Plan/Pedestrian Connection Improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power Plant Streetscape Improvements and Screening Plan Montgomery Road Streetscape and Area Improvements Motor Pool Screening Improvements Badger Lake Recreation Area Meridian Road Realignment and Streetscape Neely Road Extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alder Avenue Bike Path Extension Ball Field Complex Expansion Badger Gate Improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barracks 3400 Improvements Barracks 3700 Improvements Monterey Lake Improvements

5.2 VISUAL THEMES

Visual themes create a perception of unification within the installation. These themes create design consistency that provides orientation and a “sense of place.”

Visual themes are generalized areas that have the same general use and visual characteristics. Visual themes include broad scale activities that occur on the installation. These activities typically include similar design and layout characteristics.

Fort Wainwright visual themes are:

- Family Housing
- Historic Airfield
- River Corridor
- Town Center
- Industrial
- Recreation/Open Space
- Company Campus

5.3 VISUAL ZONES

Visual zones are areas within the visual themes that include similar visual characteristics. Visual characteristics define a “look and feel” of an area together with the dominant features that define its image. Typical visual characteristics include unique buildings, vehicular and pedestrian corridors, vehicular entrances, natural features, historical importance, and spatial relationships.

The visual zones developed for Fort Wainwright are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| ■ Family Neighborhoods | ■ Motor Pools |
| ■ Historic Landmark | ■ Badger Lake |
| ■ Administration Quad | ■ Meridian Road |
| ■ Chena River Trail | ■ Neely Road |
| ■ Exchange/Commissary | ■ Alder Avenue |
| ■ Open Space | ■ Ball Field Complex |
| ■ Power Plant | ■ Badger Gate |
| ■ DPW Shops at
Montgomery Road | ■ Barracks |
| | ■ Montgomery Lake |

The following paragraphs present a functional analysis of each of the visual zones. This analysis includes a description of the visual character, site analysis, assets, liabilities and recommendations for each zone.

The visual zones for Fort Wainwright were defined based on their impact on the installation and the ability for projects within these zones to improve functionality, safety, and visual impact.

The Site Analysis Map, Figure 5.3a, graphically illustrates existing features and characteristics of Fort Wainwright. This analysis illustrates points of opportunity and points of constraint.

Assets and liabilities are determined according to the following criteria: installation visual goals and objectives ([Section 3.2](#)), design principles ([Section 3.4](#)), and visual elements ([Section 3.5](#)) in relationship to the six design components described in Sections 7 through 12 of this Army Installation Design Guide.

Recommendations are made to correct the liabilities or enhance the assets. These recommendations are used to generate projects that are listed in [Section 6, Improvement Projects](#).

5.4 FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS VISUAL ZONE

The Family Neighborhoods Visual Zone is made up of various neighborhood blocks immediately inside and south of the installation main gate area. The architectural style of the housing units vary greatly based on the year the neighborhood units were constructed. Density of the neighborhoods varies as well as the arrangement of the units on the site. See Figure 5.4a. Due to the cold climate, most if not all, neighborhoods have large parking areas immediately adjacent to the housing entry. This has limited green space on the older units but the newer units are being constructed with attached garages which have allowed more open space. See Figures 5.4b and 5.4c. Within the family neighborhood visual zone is the main gate area. Its proximity to housing has a direct bearing on how force protection measures are provided.



▲ **Figure 5.4c**
Typical Housing Streetscape

The housing units do not present an organized space or unifying element which can create an identity within a neighborhood group. The lack of landscape plantings adjacent to the building structure or street trees to define right of way limits creates a disorganized feeling within the neighborhoods. See Figure 5.4d. Defined social spaces are not provided within a neighborhood setting and a lack of a consistent pedestrian walkway system presents a safety concern. This visual zone will look at three neighborhood improvement projects which will address spatial organization, site amenities and landscape treatments to create identities within a neighborhood unit.



▲ **Figure 5.4a**
Fort Wainwright Housing



▲ **Figure 5.4b**
Typical Housing Entry



▲ **Figure 5.4d**
Typical Housing Streetscape

The main gate area is set back from the intersection with Richardson Highway and serves as the main entrance into the installation from the west. See Figure 5.4e. The bike path which connects to the family neighborhoods from Richardson Highway creates a security concern due to the lack of physical control on the bike path. Proposed improvements to the main gate will impact the adjoining housing area and should be considered during the design implementation process.



▲ **Figure 5.4e**
The Main Gate Adjoins Housing Areas

5.4.1 Visual Character

The visual character within family housing presents a feeling of disorganization due to the lack of landscape elements or architectural features to provide a sense of place within a neighborhood unit. The architectural style of the housing units varies from one side of the street to another due to the timing of the construction of the particular units. The density of the units is high due to the lack of suitable land for construction. The undefined open space between the housing structures is accentuated due to the lack of trees or landscape elements to soften, frame or screen views. Placement of dumpsters within a housing area is random and uncontrolled as shown in Figure 5.4f. Playground equipment has been placed within housing areas at locations isolated from most housing units and paved access routes have not been provided, see Figure 5.4g. Landscape treatment within the housing area is random and minimal. The flat open terrain and overhead utility lines adds to the spatial disorganization within the housing units and a lack of definition between neighborhoods, see Figure 5.4h.



▲ **Figure 5.4f**
Placement of Dumpsters Lacks Organization



▲ **Figure 5.4g**
New Playground Lacks Paved Access Routes



▲ **Figure 5.4h**
Existing Open Space at Neighborhood Entrance

5.4.2 Site Analysis

The family housing area is an open flat plain which has been created by the removal of native tree cover. The development of the housing units has taken place over a period of time where architectural style and construction methods and standards have changed with each development cycle. This has led to a disorganized appearance within the housing community. The lack of site amenities, landscape treatment or architectural features within the various housing groups has led to a lack of spatial organization and neighborhood identity. See Figure 5.4i.



▲ **Figure 5.4i**
Housing Units Lack Space Organization

A bike path begins on the south end of the housing area and continues along Alder Avenue, ending at the intersection of Meridian Road. Walkways are installed in the newer housing areas, but a complete pedestrian walkway system is lacking in the older areas. Pedestrians within these areas must walk in the roadway or on unpaved paths. Figure 5.4j.

The lack of landscape elements and the presence of overhead utility lines create a very stark visual impact to the area. This image is reinforced by the lack of site amenities, trash enclosures, and screening of parking lots.



▲ **Figure 5.4j**
*Pedestrian Walkways
are Required*

The main gate is situated on the western boundary of the installation and serves as the primary entrance into the installation from Fairbanks. Gaffney Road leads from the main gate into the installation and Ladd Field. The majority of all traffic entering and leaving the installation uses the main gate. The current location of the visitor's center abuts housing and lacks appropriate security to protect residents as shown in Figure 5.4k. The housing which adjoins the main gate is separated from the gate by a narrow tree line and a metal fence. The main gate does not meet current force protection measures and is scheduled to undergo a reconfiguration to improve security.

5.4.3 Assets

Following are Family Neighborhoods area assets:

- Ample open space to allow for landscape upgrades.
- Bike path system adjacent to housing.
- Arctic Light School.
- Day care facilities.
- Narrow tree stand separating the main gate and housing units.

5.4.4 Liabilities

Following are Family Neighborhood area liabilities:

- Overhead utility lines.
- Lack of Landscaping for screening and accent.
- Trash Dumpsters.
- Play areas without proper access for strollers or handicapped access.
- Minimal site amenities.
- Lack of neighborhood social gathering spaces.
- Non-conforming security measures between the main gate area and housing units.

5.4.5 Recommendations

The Family Neighborhoods need neighborhood identifiers to designate various housing groups. Social spaces for small scale social interaction should also be provided within the housing groups. Creation of defined open space is needed to promote a feeling of intimacy and provide an attractive space of passive recreational activities. Pedestrian access to these areas is needed to help create useable spaces and provide safe alternative routes for residents to reach key facilities within the housing areas.



▲ **Figure 5.4k**
Fort Wainwright
Visitor Center

Figures 5.4l and 5.4m provide plan views of the proposed improvements and illustrate the proposed site relationships which can be created within distinct neighborhoods. The walkway system and the street tree locations are recommended to initiate a sense of place within the housing area.

Figures 5.4n and 5.4o provide a plan view and sketch of the front entry gate design concept planned for the Main Entrance Gate and the reconfiguration of the gate security check point. This project provides a new entrance control point with signage and landscape improvements. These improvements meet current force protection criteria.



▲ **Figure 5.4l**
Chillkoot Housing
Improvement Plan



▲ **Figure 5.4m**
Northern Lights Housing Improvement Plan

The IDG recommendations for the Family Neighborhood Visual Zone will:

- Enhance the visual impact of the installation.
- Provide appropriate landscaping that enhances the gate, meets force protection requirements, and can be easily maintained.
- Provide landscape and site amenity improvements to better define a neighborhood unit.
- Create pedestrian access routes to various facilities within the housing area.
- Create social spaces to reinforce neighborhood values.
- Meet IDG requirements.



▲ **Figure 5.4n**
Main Gate Improvement Plan



▲ **Figure 5.4o**
Main Gate Entry Feature

5.5 HISTORIC LANDMARK VISUAL ZONE

The Historic Landmark Visual Zone lies within the Historic Airfield Theme area and encompasses Ladd Field and the majority of the support facilities associated with airfield operations at Fort Wainwright. The primary facilities include the Hangers 1, 2, and 3, as well as fire and rescue facilities, the administration quadrangle, and various airfield operation support services. This visual zone houses installation air operations and the Bureau of Land Management. The visual impact of the area is the open space encompassing the airfield and support facilities. Constructed on the alluvial plain created by the Chena River, the runway and airfield provides the installation with a visually unimpressive open space of historical significance. Figures 5.5a, 5.5b and 5.5c capture the scope of the space and the typical street scenes adjacent to the airfield.



▲ **Figure 5.5a**
Ladd Field View Shed from Ketcham Road

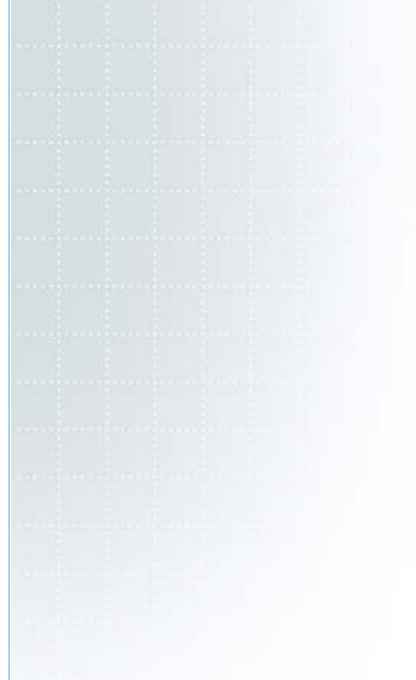
▲ **Figure 5.5b**
Ladd Field View Shed at Gaffney Road



▲ **Figure 5.5c**
Ladd Field View Shed at the Intersection of Montgomery and Ketcham Road



▲ **Figure 5.5a**
Ladd Field View Shed from Ketcham Road



5.5.1 Visual Character

The visual character of the area is a vast open space devoid of trees or landscape plant material. There is a lack of security fencing around the airfield, especially where the runway abuts Gaffney Road and Ketchum Road. The 8,000 foot plus runway creates a vast open space with little context other than the support facilities along the perimeter of the field. Within the boundary of the airfield there are areas under remediation which present an appearance of having not been maintained for some time. Most spaces along the boundary of the airfield appear to be under utilized and poorly maintained.

A key impact to the visual quality of the area is the starkness of the open space shown in Figures 5.5d, 5.5e, and 5.5f. Overhead utilities along Gaffney Road and Ketchum Road add to the starkness of the open space. Many of the support structures within the limits of the airfield are in disrepair and not in use which adds to the negative visual impact of the space. As a historical landmark the ability to recommend specific improvements to the airfield is not possible in this IDG. However, the visual character of the administrative quad, which is part of the historic airfield, is can be improved within the limits of a cultural resources review and the laws of National Historic Registration to enhance the quality of the area.



▲ **Figure 5.5d**
*Ladd Field View Shed Looking West
at Montgomery Road*



▲ **Figure 5.5e**
*Airfield Historic District Looking North
from the Intersection of Montgomery
and Ketcham Roads*



▲ **Figure 5.5f**
View of Airfield Historic District

5.5.2 Site Analysis

The Historic Landmark Visual Zone consists of all facilities located within the boundaries of the landmark district including view sheds from the field. The vistas from both ends of the runway are attractive and add context to the overall site. The alluvial plain on which the airfield was constructed has little to no topographic relief. The architecture of the facilities within the landmark district is utilitarian, consisting of large hangars and smaller support facilities for airfield operation. Hangars 2 and 3 are Birchwood Hangars and are two of the three remaining in the world; the third is located at Fort Greely, Alaska. Gaffney Road and Ketchum Road both cross the end of the runway within the glide path of aircraft using the field. Little security protection is present in this area with Ketchum Road in close proximity to the aircraft fueling point. Overhead utilities distract from the open space, however they do provide a definition of the perimeter of the area. See Figures 5.5g and 5.5h.



▲ Figure 5.5g

Overhead Utility Lines Define Area



▲ Figure 5.5h

Runway Clear Zone



▲ **Figure 5.5i**

View of Airfield From Birch Mountain

The Chena River corridor lies adjacent to the airfield and provides natural character to the area. Vegetation associated with the river corridor does add some visual relief to the open space of the airfield. The distant mountain range and forest lands provide an impressive backdrop to the airfield and provide the only context to the site. Figure 5.5i is an overview of the airfield from Birch Mountain showing the airfield in relation to the rest of the installation.

5.5.3 Assets

Following are Historic Landmark area assets:

- Adequate open space.
- Existing facilities have a unifying color palette.
- Historic importance.

5.5.4 Liabilities

Following are Historic Landmark area liabilities:

- Lack of a unified landscape theme or palette.
- No architectural theme to installation buildings.
- Poorly defined open space.
- Lack of a unified signage.
- Environmental remediation sites.

5.5.5 Recommendations

The Historic Airfield area comprises a large portion of the installation and is historically significant to the installation and to the State of Alaska. Due to its landmark status no specific projects are envisioned for the visual zone.

5.6 ADMINISTRATION QUAD VISUAL ZONE

The Administrative Quad Visual Zone is part of the Historic Airfield theme area and houses the original areas of the installation. The area consists of the original parade grounds fronting the administration building, Hanger #1, and the Law Center. Immediately north of the parade ground, at the apex of the circle, is Building 1, the Commanding General's Home, Figure 5.6a; the Chapel, Figure 5.6b; and Murphy Hall, Figure 5.6c. The significance of the area is the original design of the complex. The "Beaux Arts" concept of the wheel is a common aspect of military installation design from early the 1900's. This design has remained intact during the years of growth embraced by Fort Wainwright.



▲ **Figure 5.6a**
Commanding General's Home

This visual zone is identified to create a defined streetscape and entry feature announcing the entry into the area. This area also possesses some of the original architecture of the installation and historical information documenting events held on the installation during World War II and the Cold War Era. Also in this area are the underground "utilidors", which connect the buildings on the quad and provided essential utilities to the structures. This concept is still used today to provide utilities to new facilities. The original vent structures, which were constructed with some architectural detail, provide interest in this area. See Figure 5.6d.



▲ **Figure 5.6b**
Historic Chapel



▲ **Figure 5.6c**
Murphy Hall



▲ **Figure 5.6d**
Utilidor Vents

The existing plant material in this area is mature spruce trees and some birch at various locations adjacent to some of the structures. There is a lack of uniformity to the plantings; some buildings have no plantings, trees have overtaken the Commanding General's home site and limit the view of the home to a small portion of the house. See Figure 5.6e.

5.6.1 Visual Character

The visual zone is defined by the Marks Road intersection with Gaffney Road on the east and west and Hanger #1 on the south. The architectural character of the buildings provides design context to the area and provides structural character to the site. Noticeably absent from the area are overhead utility lines. The streets are visibly narrower in this part of the installation with older barracks set very close to the street as seen in Figure 5.6f. Building entrances off of Gaffney about the 4-foot sidewalk making enforcement of force protection measures impractical.

This is an intimate space within the confines of the installation and should be preserved. See Figure 5.6g. The color palette of the structures is attractive and adds interest to the area. There is a lack of trees to provide screening of the parking spaces adjacent to the buildings and some adjoining areas show a lack of maintenance.

Figure 5.6h provides a typical street scene found on Gaffney Road.



▲ **Figure 5.6g**
Historic Administration Building



▲ **Figure 5.6e**
Overgrown Trees



▲ **Figure 5.6f**
*Gaffney Road Streetscape
Looking East*



▲ **Figure 5.6h**
*Gaffney Road Streetscape
Looking West*

5.6.2 Site Analysis

The administrative quad area is on the National Register of Historic Places and has played a key role in the growth of the United States Military and in the development of Alaska. The National Register designation limits the type of improvements which can be undertaken in this area to improve the overall appearance. Presently the site consists of a central parade ground flanked on three sides by administrative buildings and Hanger #1. The buildings are contributing factors to the historic designation and must maintain their architectural character. Parking lots, sidewalks, and landscaping have not been given the attention necessary to keep them in good condition. Parking lot curbing has been damaged due to snow plowing operations and seasonal freeze and thaw. Parking areas lack landscape buffers or accent planting to better define the space. Signage in the area is not to current standard and needs to be upgraded.

Landscape planting along Gaffney is mature but limited to a few small areas. Where there are street trees the size and placement can restrict views of nearby intersections due to their size or location as depicted in Figures 5.6i and 5.6j. Drive entries are poorly accented by landscape plant material to denote a point where cars would enter the roadway. The large rock boulders placed along Gaffney adjacent to the administration building are not in keeping with the historical architectural theme of the area and should be replaced with a more appropriate security barrier in keeping with the historical context of the area.

The site of the historical information signs is not accessible by a walkway and does not present the importance of the events it depicts. Roadway signage along this section of Gaffney is cluttered, poorly maintained, and lacks order. See Figure 5.6k. The most mature and appropriate street tree planting exists in front of the Bureau of Land Management offices.

5.6.3 Assets

The following are the Administrative Quad assets:

- Historical significance of the area and buildings.
- Commanding General's home.
- The "Beaux Arts" design of the site.
- Established street trees fronting Bureau of Land Management office.
- Mature trees add scale to the structures.



▲ **Figure 5.6i**
Existing Landscape Along Gaffney Road



▲ **Figure 5.6j**
Existing Streetscape



▲ **Figure 5.6k**
Existing Roadway Signage

5.6.4 Liabilities

The following are the Administrative Quad liabilities:

- Gaffney Road is a narrow two lane.
- Poor circulation patterns throughout area.
- Mature landscape material has not been maintained.
- Close proximity of buildings to roadway.
- Inadequate street lights.
- Pedestrian/vehicular traffic conflicts.

5.6.5 Recommendations

Proposed improvements to the administrative quad area involve improvements to the streetscape, creation of an entry feature announcing the importance of the area, improvements to the historical information signage area, street tree plantings, improved pedestrian walkways with designated crosswalks, and restricted cross traffic movements.

The proposed streetscape for the administrative quad area provides a landscape theme to unify the roadway and allow for more efficient circulation. A simplified landscape palette along the avenue, with roadway light fixtures and accent planting at key entry points, provides a visual tie to the entrance and creates a primary corridor through the area. Figure 5.6I is the site plan of the proposed streetscape concept. Coordination with the cultural resources office is required for all work in this visual zone.



▲ **Figure 5.6I**
*Proposed Streetscape
Improvements*

The IDG recommendations for the Administrative Quad Visual Zone will:

- Create a sense of unity between all facilities along the roadway.
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns.
- Provide landscape design that highlights the existing facilities and historical elements adjacent to the roadway
- Provide landscape improvements to meet force protection requirements.

5.7 CHENA RIVER TRAIL VISUAL ZONE

The Chena River Visual Zone is selected to provide recommendations for the extension of the river trail along the Chena River corridor. The visual zone encompasses the area between Ketchum Road and the Chena River, beginning at Engineer Park and continuing up-stream through the golf course, ending at Badger Gate.

5.7.1 Visual Character

The visual character of the Chena River is a natural riparian corridor native to this region of Alaska. It is a wildlife habitat and a recreational source for both the military personnel stationed on Fort Wainwright and local citizens. It is one of the highest valued visual assets on the installation. See Figure 5.7a.

5.7.2 Site Analysis

The river flows from the east to the west through the installation and on into Fairbanks. Both sides of the river bank have a well established riparian area consisting of native trees, grasses, and many types of bird and animal habitat. As a recreational source it is heavily used by local and installation personnel. A section of the river corridor is selected for this visual zone to address the extension of the Chena River Trail, see Figure 5.7b. The terrain along the bank is relatively flat with several drainage swales leading from the installation to the river. The majority of this visual zone lies within the area of the golf course and is well groomed along the bank. Figure 5.7c shows the present site conditions within the area.

There is one bridge crossing leading from the golf course to the opposite side of the river which possesses some unique architectural character. It is at this point where a wide vista of the river and the land beyond is framed by the river corridor. See Figure 5.7d.

5.7.3 Assets

The following are the Chena River Visual Zone assets:

- Well preserved riparian corridor.
- Heavily used recreational asset.
- Visually appealing.



▲ **Figure 5.7a**
Chena River



▲ **Figure 5.7b**
Existing River Trail



▲ **Figure 5.7c**
Proposed Trail Corridor



▲ **Figure 5.7d**
River Vista

5.7.4 Liabilities

The following are the Chena River Visual Zone liabilities:

- Limited access.
- Limited seating areas.
- Chena River trail does not exist in this visual zone.
- Stormwater swales from the installation empty into the river.

5.7.5 Recommendations

The Chena River is one of the most heavily used recreational facilities on the installation. The existing trail system along the river further down stream is heavily used and an extension of the existing trail in this area is needed to complete the trail system. The project shown in Figure 5.7e provides a recommended routing for the trail extension. Locations are identified for rest areas and river overlooks, which provide areas for picnic opportunities and to observation of river activities. This trail extension includes routing the trail to Badger Gate, providing pedestrian access through the installation.

The IDG recommendations for the Chena River Visual Zone area will:

- Complete the pedestrian trail system through the installation along the river.
- Increase recreational opportunities for installation personnel.
- Provide rest areas along the river to observe and enjoy the natural environment.



▲ **Figure 5.7e**
Trail Routing Plan

5.8 EXCHANGE/COMMISSARY VISUAL ZONE

The existing exchange and commissary facility is located within the Town Center Theme area and is selected as a visual zone due to the importance of the site and the high traffic flow in the area. The exchange and commissary facility is a very large combined building with a large parking area fronting the facility as shown in Figure 5.8a. Access to the facility is from Meridian Road on the west and Santiago Avenue on the east. The parking lot is without islands or landscape screening to soften the impact of the large paved area. Large concrete bollards shown in Figure 5.8b line the front entrance walk serving as force protection barriers and parking lot light foundations. Designated pedestrian access to the facility from the parking lot or adjoining roadways does not exist. The overall appearance of the facility is uninviting and difficult to access.



▲ Figure 5.8a

Existing Exchange/Commissary Facility

This area is selected to provide an improvement plan for the entrance to the facility and to develop a link to bachelor enlisted barracks as part of a larger plan to create a town center area on Fort Wainwright.

5.8.1 Visual Character

The visual impact of this area is very negative due to the lack of landscape plantings, poorly designed parking light fixtures, and the lack of site detail to create an inviting area for customers of the facilities. Adjacent to the exchange and commissary facility is the new Northern Lights Inn, bowling center, class six store, furniture store, library, credit union, and the new physical fitness facility. South of the facility is a large open space and the new ball field complex.



▲ Figure 5.8b

Concrete Bollards Front the Entrance



▲ **Figure 5.8c**
Exchange/Commissary Facility Entrance

5.8.2 Site Analysis

The exchange and commissary facility is situated between two major north-south roadways in the center of the installation. It is a fairly new facility with a large paved parking lot immediately in front of the facility. There are no parking lot islands due to snow removal operations, and no separation between the parking lot and the roadway serving the parking lot to the south. There is not a primary roadway serving the site which creates traffic congestion during peak periods of the day. Pedestrian access to the site is restricted to walking in the roadway with passing vehicles, or on worn pathways across open ground. It is a heavily used area which lacks the infrastructure to support the traffic generated by the facility. Figure 5.8c shows the present site conditions leading into the area.

Signage leading to the facility is minimal and the area lacks any order of traffic flow. The area lacks a walkway system for pedestrian safety and traffic control. See Figure 5.8d.

5.8.3 Assets

The following are the Exchange/Commissary Visual Zone assets:

- Ample open space.
- Centrally located on the installation.



▲ **Figure 5.8d**
Lack of Designated Pedestrian Walkways

5.8.4 Liabilities

The following are the Exchange/Commissary Visual Zone liabilities:

- Limited roadway and parking lot lighting.
- Poor traffic control signage.
- Pedestrian walkways or crosswalks do not exist.
- Minimal landscape plantings.
- Pedestrian scale spaces do not exist.

5.8.5 Recommendations

The exchange/commissary facility is one of the most heavily used facilities on the installation. The project shown in Figure 5.8e provides a more defined pedestrian friendly site organization which enhances the appearance of the main entrance. A perspective sketch, Figure 5.8f, of the entrance area depicts envisioned improvements to the area which creates a more pedestrian friendly and organized space. Force protection measures are provided in the placement of large planters separating the parking lot from the pedestrian walkway, which also creates a barrier between the parking lot and the store entries. A separation of vehicle and pedestrian traffic flow combined with large landscape planters and built in bench seating areas provides a more secure facility. The proposed site amenities are also compatible with the building architecture.



▲ **Figure 5.8e**
Exchange/Commissary Entry Plan

Improvements include defining parking spaces in the existing lot and developing a central axis for pedestrian traffic through the lot, safe from motor vehicle conflicts. Pedestrian scale lighting is provided to highlight the walkway system and provide architectural features to the site. This axis also serves as the focal point to the Town Center area south of the exchange/commissary facility terminating at a memorial flag plaza south of the exchange door entry.

The IDG recommendations for the Exchange/Commissary Visual Zone area will:

- Improve traffic movement.
- Improve the visual quality of the facility.
- Provide needed landscape improvements.
- Create a pedestrian corridor for the soldiers and family members.
- Improve safety for users of the facility.
- Provide roadway and pedestrian lighting.
- Create a sense of place on the installation.



▲ **Figure 5.8f**
Perspective of Proposed Improvements

5.9 OPEN SPACE VISUAL ZONE

The Open Space Visual Zone is located in the Town Center Theme area and encompasses the undeveloped open space south of the Exchange/Commissary facility and east of the existing ball field complex. This area is a large open plain with grass cover. This space is seen as a key element in the creation of a central focal point for large events and passive recreational activities. There is an opportunity to create a sense of place on the installation, centrally located between family housing and enlisted barracks, and preserve the area for future creation of a memorial space for military personnel. See Figure 5.9a.



▲ Figure 5.9a
Existing Open Space

5.9.1 Visual Character

The present physical character of the area is one of an open undeveloped space. The quality of the area is hampered by existing environmental conditions and the lack of tree cover to better define the space. Existing building structures include a wide range of architecture style and age, providing a disorganized appearance. Figure 5.9b shows a view of the new Northern Lights Inn and Figure 5.9c shows the Class Six store within this visual zone.

5.9.2 Site Analysis

The site is a flat grass plain situated between the Northern Lights Inn on the east and the ball field complex on the west with the exchange/commissary facility to the north. Alder Road borders the area on the south with the temporary modularity site south of Alder Road. The area has remained undeveloped due to contamination of the area with a petroleum tar product. Remediation of the area is not expected due to the amount of material underground.



▲ Figure 5.9b
Northern Lights Inn

The site is covered with native grasses. Little tree cover is present except for the small tree buffer adjacent to the ball field complex parking lot.



▲ **Figure 5.9c**
Class Six Store

5.9.3 Assets

The following are the Open Space Visual Zone assets:

- Centrally located on the installation.
- Direct access to the exchange/commissary facility.
- Excellent field of vision for security personnel.
- Opportunity to establish a central focal point on the installation for large community events and passive recreational activities.
- Opportunity to create a strong pedestrian corridor linking the enlisted barracks area to the community services facilities.

5.9.4 Liabilities

The following are Open Space Visual Zone liabilities:

- Contaminated soil.

5.9.5 Recommendations

This open space provides an opportunity to address the creation of a town center on the installation centrally located to all military personnel and existing community facilities and provide for a pedestrian corridor linking the enlisted barracks area to community services. The central element of the plan is



▲ **Figure 5.9d**
Proposed Improvements

a flag plaza and memorial area, see Figure 5.9d. Figure 5.9e depicts a perspective of the proposed plan in context with the design elements envisioned in the area. This concept also provides an organized element to the site and unifies key elements of the installation into a logical solution of the undefined space.

The IDG recommendations for the Open Space Visual Zone will:

- Create a sense of place for the installation and help define its identity.
- Improve pedestrian circulation.
- Create a memorial space within the town center theme area.
- Provide landscape improvements to enhance existing community facilities.



▲ **Figure 5.9e**
Perspective of Town Center

5.10 POWER PLANT VISUAL ZONE

The Power Plant Visual Zone is selected due to the visual impact the facility has on the overall appearance of the installation. See Figure 5.10a. The power plant commands a prominent place on the installation due to the size of the structure and its central location. It is located in the Industrial Theme area and is situated between the Family Neighborhoods and Town Center theme areas. North of the plant site is a complex of workshops and smaller buildings. South of the plant are the cooling ponds and coal storage area, and a native stand of trees screening the plant from Alder Avenue. The visual image presented by this facility is industrial. The power plant is a contributing element to the Cold War Historic District; plans for this building, including plantings, should be coordinated with the cultural resources office.

5.10.1 Visual Character

The visual character of the space is defined by the size of the facility, the adjacent rail lines, and the adjacent support facilities. The area surrounding the power plant is open and without landscape planting or screening of any type. The appearance of the area is very industrial and unattractive. See Figure 5.10b. The stark character is most apparent when housing is located in close proximity to the power plant.

5.10.2 Site Analysis

The power plant is the largest vertical structure on Fort Wainwright and commands a central position on the installation. The structure itself is a large structural steel framework with gray or light beige metal siding. The ground plain leading up to the structure is flat and devoid of any significant vertical screen. Overhead utility lines are prevalent around the site. The parking areas associated with the power plant limit the ability to create green space within this area. See Figure 5.10c.



▲ Figure 5.10c
Power Plant



▲ Figure 5.10a
Fort Wainwright Power Plant



▲ Figure 5.10b
Power Plant Site

5.10.3 Assets

The following are Power Plant Visual Zone assets:

- Large area of trees to the south of the plant site.
- Provides power needs to the installation.

5.10.4 Liabilities

The following are Power Plant Visual Zone liabilities:

- Largest vertical structure on Fort Wainwright.
- Overhead utility lines throughout the site.
- Poor definition of space surrounding structure.

5.10.5 Recommendations

The Power Plant visual zone recommendations improve the visual quality of the area between the surrounding roadways and the buildings associated with the plant, and provide screening for the family housing units adjacent to the site. A street tree program provides scale to the area and add green space. The plantings along the railroad track, adjacent to family housing, provide a vegetative screen to buffer the view and add visual texture to the area. See Figures 5.10d and 5.10e for plans of the proposed improvements.

The IDG recommendations for the Power Plant Visual Zone will:

- Improve the visual quality of the installation.
- Screen unsightly views.



▲ Figure 5.10d

Proposed Power Plant Streetscape



▲ Figure 5.10e

Proposed Screening Adjacent to Housing

5.11 DPW SHOPS AT MONTGOMERY ROAD VISUAL ZONE

The DPW Shops area is selected as a visual zone to develop site improvements which address many common site issues at Fort Wainwright. The shops visual zone provides guidance for the development of facilities within the industrial theme area and addresses recommendations for streetscape treatments. See Figures 5.11a and 5.11b.



▲ **Figure 5.11a**
DPW Shops

The DPW shops building is both an administrative office building and a maintenance and construction equipment shop with a large fenced storage area behind the building. The front of the building has three entrances leading from the gravel parking lot which is adjacent to Montgomery Road. The visual impact of the facility is typical of most buildings in the industrial area. The landscape plant material adjacent to the front of the building is minimally maintained and the building entrances are not well defined. See Figures 5.11c, 5.11d, and 5.11e.



▲ **Figure 5.11c**
Existing Building Landscape Treatment



▲ **Figure 5.11d**
Existing DPW Shops Entry



▲ **Figure 5.11b**
Parking is Not Well Defined at DPW Shops



▲ **Figure 5.11e**
Existing Building Entry